

**MINUTES
of the
FIFTH MEETING
of the
RURAL ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES TASK FORCE**

**November 8, 2021
State Capitol, House Chambers
Santa Fe**

The fifth meeting of the Rural Economic Opportunities Task Force was called to order by Senator Siah Correa Hemphill, co-chair, on November 8, 2021 at 10:25 a.m. in the House Chambers of the State Capitol in Santa Fe.

Present

Sen. Siah Correa Hemphill, Co-Chair
Rep. Candie G. Sweetser, Co-Chair
Rep. Rachel A. Black
Sen. Crystal R. Diamond
Rep. Kelly K. Fajardo
Sen. Carrie Hamblen
Rep. Susan K. Herrera
Sen. Leo Jaramillo
Rep. Roger E. Montoya
Rep. Nathan P. Small
Sen. Elizabeth "Liz" Stefanics

Advisory Members

Rep. Tara L. Lujan

Absent

Rep. Anthony Allison
Rep. Gail Armstrong
Sen. Craig W. Brandt
Rep. Willie D. Madrid
Sen. Michael Padilla
Sen. Shannon D. Pinto
Sen. Joshua A. Sanchez

Rep. Ambrose Castellano
Rep. Rebecca Dow
Sen. David M. Gallegos
Rep. Harry Garcia
Rep. D. Wonda Johnson
Rep. Patricia A. Lundstrom
Rep. Antonio Maestas
Sen. Brenda G. McKenna
Sen. Mimi Stewart

Staff

Mark Edwards, Bill Drafter, Legislative Council Service (LCS)
Rebecca Griego, Records Officer, LCS
Sara Wiedmaier, Research Assistant, LCS

Minutes Approval

Because the task force will not meet again this year, the minutes for this meeting have not been officially approved by the task force.

Guests

The guest list is in the meeting file.

Handouts

Handouts and other written testimony are in the meeting file and posted on the legislature's website.

References to Webcast

The time reference noted next to each agenda item in this document is cross-referenced to the webcast of the task force meeting, which can be found at www.nmlegis.gov, under the "Webcast" tab. The presentations made and task force discussions for agenda items can be found on the recorded webcast for this meeting.

Monday, November 8

Welcome and Introductions (10:25 a.m.)

Senator Hemphill welcomed the task force and asked the members and staff to introduce themselves.

Update on the Rural Infrastructure Study (10:28 a.m.)

Terry Brunner, chief executive officer, Pivotal New Mexico, and Jenny Jackson, program manager, Pivotal New Mexico, gave an update on the progress of a rural infrastructure needs study being conducted by Pivotal New Mexico and said that the report was expected to be completed by December 15, 2021. The presentation can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/handouts/REOTF%20110821%20Item%201%20Pivotol%20Update.pdf>.

Co.Starters Entrepreneurial Program for New and Rebuilding Businesses (11:48 a.m.)

Priscilla Lucero, executive director, Southwest New Mexico Council of Governments (SWNMCOG), and Emily Gojkovich, economic development planner, SWNMCOG, gave a presentation on the Co.Starters program run by SWNMCOG that provides new and rebuilding businesses with a networking and support group. The presentation can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/handouts/REOTF%20110821%20Item%202%20SW%20New%20Mexico%20COG%20Co.Starters%20Presentation.pdf>.

Food, Farm and Hunger Five-Year Plan (1:33 p.m.)

Kendal Chavez, food and hunger coordinator, Office of the Governor; Audrey Cooper, project manager, Food Security and Primary Care, Human Services Department; and Patricia

Trujillo, Ph.D., deputy secretary, Higher Education Department, provided an overview of the development of a five-year plan to address hunger and small farm issues in New Mexico communities through the development of locally sourced food programs. The presentation can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/handouts/REOTF%20110821%20Item%203%20Food,%20Farm%20and%20Hunger%20Initiative.pdf>.

Public Comment (2:40 p.m.)

A list of individuals making public comment is available in the meeting file.

Endorsement of Legislation (2:45 p.m.)

Mr. Edwards outlined a bill proposed for endorsement. The bill would provide funding to each of the seven regional planning districts to hire two planning staff members and contract for engineering services for four years. Upon a motion by Senator Stefanics and seconded by Representative Herrera, the bill was endorsed by the task force without objection.

Adjournment

There being no further business before the task force, the meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m.